DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 129 760 SP 010 475

AUTHOR Moriarty, Dick; Jones, Patti
TITLE Change Agent Research: Phase I-Organizational Audit and Communication Feedback Applied to Windsor Minor Lacrosse.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 26p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$2.06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Athletic Programs; Athletics; *Goal Orientation; Organizational Change; *Organizational Development; Organizations (Groups); *Questionnaires; Research Methodology; *Research Projects; Systems Analysis
IDENTIFIERS *Amateur Sports; Canada; *Lacrosse; Sports Institution for Research

ABSTRACT

This study reports the results of a pilot Change Agent Research (CAR) project initiated in the summer of 1975 by the Sports Institute for Research (SIR) for the Windsor Minor Lacrosse Association. The purpose of the project was to audit the association to diagnose the nature of its organizational problems and assist in initiating change in order to reduce the gap between stated goals and actual behavior. The researchers utilized the SAW method for diagnosis. SAW consists of [S]eeing by audiovisual and personal observation monitoring; [A]sking by semi-directed, focused interviews; and [W]ritten opinionnaires. Results indicated problems within the organization stemming from ambiguity of goals and outside pressures. Data collected from players indicated problems stemming from differences in age and low morale due to dropouts. The interviews and questionnaires depicted an amateur sports direction for the organization; however, monitoring by media and personal observation indicated the organization was heading in a professional athletics direction. Overall, the results revealed that the players want to operate as an amateur sports association and revisions must be made in the structure of the association to accommodate the players' needs and desire for amateur status. Appendices include sample SAW opinionnaires. (MM)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED129760

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

CHANGE AGENT RESEARCH: PHASE I - ORGANIZATIONAL AUDIT AND COMMUNICATION FEEDBACK APPLIED TO WINDSOR MINOR LACROSSE

by Dick Moriarty and Patti Jones

In the summer of 1975 the Sports Institute for Research (SIR) initiated a pilot Change Agent Research (CAR) at the request of and for the Windsor Minor Lacrosse Association (WMLA). The purpose of the project was to audit the organization using the SAW method to diagnose the nature of the problems and assist in initiating change in order to reduce the gap between stated goals and actual behavior. SAW consists of Seeing by audio visual and personal observation monitoring; Asking by Semi-Directed Focused Interviews; and Written opinionnaires.

Asking

by J. Grand & D. Stulla

The Semi-Directed Focused Interview was utilized to help the executive, officials, coaches, parents, and players involved in WMLA identify the ultimate goal of the organization, and also to identify any conflict or obstacles preventing achievement of this ultimate goal. From the results of this section three general conclusions were drawn:

1. There is a similarity in perception of the ultimate goal by both the adults and the players, ie., both felt that fun and participation for boys was the ultimate goal.

SP010 475

2. Both players and adults agree that the largest area of strain stems from parental pressures on players and officials.
3. Both players and adults feel that the major problem is lack of participants in the program.

Several recommendations were developed by WMLA members and the SIR/CAR Task Force.

1. Concerning parental pressure problem → An alternate means of recreation could be provided for the parents during game or practice session. Eliminating parents from the games would possibly lead to further complications.
2. More attention should be paid to the needs and desires of the players.
3. An occasional open meeting to inform parents of what's happening may solve the communication problem. (For examples of these interviews refer to Appendix A.)

Written Opinionnaire

by J. Osborne & B. Weglarz (Development), D. Peels (Delivery & Retrieval), & M. Quigley (Computer Analysis)

This project team dealt with the development, distribution, retrieval, and computer analysis of written opinionnaires based on the Audio Interviews. Two major samples of the population were

involved: (1) one group of players and parents presently involved in the '75 season; and (2) the other group of players and parents who were not playing in '75, but who had played the previous season. Two separate opinionnaires were used, one for the parents, and the other for players. These were distributed at Adie Knox Herman Arena to presently playing people, and verbally, over the phone, to those not presently involved in WMLA. The information gathered was then statistically analyzed by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. The following results were obtained.

a) Adult Questionnaire:

1. The majority of respondents felt that the major goal was in an Amateur Sport (AS) direction, ie., fun and sportsmanship were the main objectives. However, the immediate goals were in a Professional Athletics (PA) direction, ie., skills, strategies, and quality instructors were most important.
2. Conflicts seemed to stem from a PA direction, ie., parental pressures, and overemphasis on winning.
3. Inside pressures and strains were also PA directed, ie., parental pressures, family obligations, and poor distribution of quality players.

4. Parents' suggestions for improving the organization were equally divided between improved communication (AS) and increased number of paid instructors (PA).
5. For improving the administration more parent involvement, and a decrease in parental pressures seem to be favoured.
6. The changes that parents would like to see were split between increasing the number of qualified paid coaches (PA) and increasing emphasis on house league play (AS).
7. Most felt that the cause of the drop-off in enrollment was due to changes in the format, ie., transportation to one centrally located arena, and a daytime program. However, some felt (32%) that the reason for the drop-off in enrollment was due to an overemphasis on skill and/or winning and a de-emphasis on fun and enjoyment.

b) Players' Opinionnaire:

1. There didn't appear to be much difference in attitude between boys playing both All-Star and House League, and those playing House League only, as was generally expected.
2. There was a general decrease in acceptance relative to an increase in age in the following areas (an inverse ratio or negative correlation, ie, as age goes up, need or desire goes down or vice versa):

a) need to be more strict and to reduce rough play
b) de-emphasizing winning
c) asking players about playing times
d) playing to make the city famous
e) difficulty in getting to the arena
f) playing for excellence.

3. There was a general increase relative to an increase in age in the following areas (in proportion or positive correlation, ie., as age goes up, want or desire goes up or vice versa):

a) improved refereeing
b) good players should be played more
c) need for more tournaments
d) coach's interest in winning

4. There was no significant difference on the question of the difficulty in getting to the arena. This may indicate that the transportation problem may not be as big a problem as was generally thought.

5. More significant problems appear to be de-emphasizing winning, emphasizing skills, and reducing rough play.

6. Most nonplayers and their parents do not like lacrosse the way it is at present.

c) Competition Concern (A third questionnaire given to both players and adults.)

This questionnaire was used to determine at which end of the spectrum of Amateur Sport to Professional Athletics this organization lay. An Amateur Sport (AS) direction was designated by certain characteristics in this questionnaire, for example, participate

and play, generalization - child's overall development, partake for fun and relaxation, and playing is its own reward - no banquet or trophies. Most of the views of those answering this questionnaire were AS directed. However, a few deviations were observed, as can be seen in the following results.

1. The overall view appears to be headed in an AS direction, although the areas of rewards (achievement should be rewarded) and philosophy (anything worth doing is worth doing well) need to be reviewed as they are PA directed, and run counter to the overall trend.
2. The executives' views are in an AS direction, although their philosophy and commitment of time (6 hours or more) need revision as they are PA directed and run counter to the overall trend.
3. The parents' views are AS directed, although the areas of philosophy and rewards show weaknesses.
4. The officials' views are again generally AS directed, although the areas of rewards and commitment of time reflect a neutral stance, and their philosophy points toward PA.
5. The players' views are generally AS directed, although contradictory attitudes exist in the areas of long-range aim (specialization - child's skills development), rewards, and philosophy.

6. The coaches' views are mixed as they were found to be neutral on philosophy and PA directed on long-range aim, immediate objectives, rewards, and commitment of time. (For samples of the various questionnaires refer to Appendix B.)

In summary, both the Audio interviewing and the Written opinionnaires show a strong avowed or verbal long-range philosophic commitment to Amateur Sport, but a weaker commitment in more practical intermediate and immediate objectives and tasks. Monitoring of behavior by media and observers, as shown below, indicates a similar spread on the Amateur Sport to Professional Athletics spectrum, however, one more predisposed to professional athletics.

Seeing: Personal Observation & Media

by D. MacDonald and J.G. Vienneau (Personal Observation) and R. Valentinuzzi and G. Ghent (Media)

The personal observation section of this study dealt with recording facial expressions and aggressive acts (cooperative or confrontive) before, during, and after both the instructional periods and the game. Five comparisons were made:

a) comparing winning and losing to smiling faces
b) comparing winning and losing to frowning faces
c) comparing instructional period and game to smiling faces
d) comparing instructional period and game to frowning faces
e) comparing winning and losing to aggression

A significant difference was found in three of these five comparisons:

a) facial expression (smiling) of players when comparing winning and losing, ie., smiling was greater while winning than while losing

b) facial expression (smiling) of players when comparing instructional period and game, ie., smiling was greater during the game than during the instructional period.

c) facial expression (frowning) of players when comparing instructional period and game, ie., frowning was greater during the game than during the instructional period

The player interaction before the game was mostly between players of the same team (85%). During the game the players' encouragement from the bench to team mates was generally positive. The instructors were also very positive in their approach.

There were very few fans present at any one time, and there were always more females than males present. Their comments were generally positive, however, the majority of fans were passive and made very few comments.

In this study aggression was defined in terms of physical contact. During game situations aggression seemed to be more than what was desired according to interviews and opinionnaires with WMLA members, especially in the younger categories where there

appeared to be a greater difference in physical development between players. Several recommendations were proposed by this group's members.

1. The rules of the game might be modified for the Tykes, ie., they might play their games cross-court instead of playing the full length.
2. Sometimes, especially for the younger players, their drills could be divided into different parts in order to permit them to master the individual skills before trying to combine two or three together.
3. Emphasis on checking should be reduced, and the number of passes in the game could be increased.
4. More instruction time should be given to the goalies.
5. Teams should be balanced out in terms of the ability of the players, and the number of players on each team.

The audio /isual monitoring consisted of photographic recordings of all the inter-relationships that existed between:

a) player to player
b) player to coach/instructor
c) player to fans
d) player to parents
e) fans to players

There was no focal point when taking these pictures. The project leaders tried to capture an objective, reliable, and valid sample of any and all aspects of the sessions. Vocal interactions were also recorded. Some of these slides and video-tapings were presented to WMLA members in July of '75!

Summary

The adult interviews and questionnaires showed problems within the organization stemming from ambiguity of goals and outside pressures.

The players' interviews and opinionnaires showed problems within the organization stemming from differences in age. Also, the problem of drop outs showed that their attitudes toward lacrosse are not positive.

The Project Competition Concern questionnaire showed that the organization has picked an Amateur Sport direction. Efforts should be made to ensure everyone is striving in this direction in all aspects of the organization.

Although the interviews and questionnaires depicted an Amateur Sport direction, monitoring by media and personal observation showed certain areas headed in the Professional Athletic direction. Discrepancies existed between the aggression desired by WMLA members, and what was actually seen during game situations. Also, younger players were often placed in situations where age, size, and personal differences were generally not sufficiently taken into consideration. Needs of the players are of utmost concern in Amateur Sport. Certain revisions must be made by WMLA to enable their organization to operate more near the Amateur Sport end of the spectrum which audio interviews and written opinionnaires reveal both adult's and player's want and need.

The results of this study are by no means complete. Lack of sufficient time and staff may have limited effectiveness on this study; however, it is hoped that the preceding conclusions and recommendations will be of some assistance to the association in evaluating their program, and adjusting structure and people so that expectations and achievements can be matched.

Semi-Directed Focused Interview

List the following below in pencil on the cassette label before the interview.

Name of Interviewer _____

Name of Interviewee _____

Position _____

Date _____ Place _____

Focus of Interview (Organization) _____

Note: _____ = (name of organization)

Initial Statement: The University of Windsor and _____ are working cooperatively to make _____ more effective and efficient.

Reinforcement Statement: You are one of those closest to _____ and therefore I appreciate an opportunity to interview you and record your observations and feelings.

Elicit response on Items #1 -

1. Could you please identify the ultimate goal (mission) (1) you see in _____.
2. Could you comment on conflict (obstacles) (2) which prevent achievement of this goal.

Events

3. Could you identify significant events (3) you see in _____ such as (3-a) task (or aims) for this year.
4. Could you comment on (3-b) structure (or organization).
5. Could you comment on (3-c) control (or administration).

Individuals and Groups

6. Could you please identify significant (4) individuals or groups you see in _____.
7. Could you comment on (4-a) their traits (or characteristics).
8. Could you comment on (4-b) their situation (or roles).
9. Could you comment on (4-c) their behavior (or expectations).

External to Focus - Supra

10. Could you comment on (5) social stresses on _____ from outside the organization.

External to Focus - Intra

11. Could you comment on (6) constituent strain on _____ from within the organization.
12. Could you comment on (7) recommended changes (or alternate management techniques) you would like to see in _____.
13. How do you feel about criticism of _____ (name appropriate one)
    a) executives
    b) coaches
    c) officials
    d) parents
    e) players
    f) sponsors

14. Some critics of _____ say there is too much stress on winning and too little fun! True or false?

15. At this point revert to any covert conflict which was alluded to during the interview.

16. Close with a positive thank you reaction for time and expertise of interviewee.

APPENDIX A

SEMI DIRECTED FOCUSED INTERVIEW FOR PLAYERS

Introduction

My name is _____. What is your first name?
first name only

This isn't a test. There are no right or wrong answers. I just want you to answer my questions so I know what you think of _____.
(fill in name of organization)

1. Can you tell me about some of the problems there in your _____?
(CONFLICT)

Control

2a) Can you tell me who runs the _____? (CONTROL)

b) How does they/the person do it? (STRUCTURE) Do(es) the person/they have help?

c) Do you know why these people do this?

Groups and Individuals

3a) Can you tell who the important people in your _____ are?
Can you describe them? (TRAITS)
Why are they important? (ROLE) What do they do that makes them important?
How do they behave?

Constituent Strain

4. Are there any complaints from people who are part of your _____?

Social Stress

5. Do you know of any complaints from people who aren't part of your _____?

6. Is there any change you would like to see in _____? (CHANGE)

7. Some people say _____ is bad for growing boys/girls.
What do you say?
Some people say that winning is more important than having fun.
What do you say about this?

8. We have been talking about you playing _____ and all the other people who help you play. Can you tell me why everybody does this? (ULTIMATE GOAL)

9. Revert to any questions unanswered or skipped over above.

10. Add any pertinent questions.

APPENDIX B

OPINIONNAIRE

This opinionnaire was developed to provide people like you with an opportunity to express their opinions on their sport or athletic organization.

Please answer all items.

Concerned Adult Opinionnaire

1. Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Role: Parent ☐ Coach ☐ Player ☐
   Manager ☐ Official ☐ Sponsor ☐
   General Public ☐
3. Name of Team _____
4. American Team ☐ Canadian Team ☐
5. No. of hours of practice per week _____
6. No. of weeks of practice per year _____
7. No. of hours donated by executives per year _____
8. No. of hours donated by coach per year _____
9. Cost of membership in club per year per child _____
10. Cost of equipment and travel per year (estimate) _____

Please rank the alternatives below for all items listed, using 1 for the most important and 5 for the least important, i.e.,

Sample: My favourite meat is or

(3) ham	(1) ham
(1) beef	(2) beef
(5) pork	(3) pork
(4) bologna	(2) bologna
(2) turkey	(5) turkey

Note: These alternatives come from those involved in swimming. You may use the space after others or the opposite page for additional comments.

1. Could you rank the ultimate goal or mission of your club:

   ( ) maximize sports participation
   ( ) fun and enjoyment
   ( ) sportsmanship and character
   ( ) skill development
   ( ) increase enrolment

   Others _____

2. Conflicts or obstacles preventing achievement of this goal are:

   ( ) transportation to and from practices
   ( ) parental pressure on players
   ( ) lack of participation
   ( ) lack of emphasis on quality play
   ( ) overemphasis on winning

   Others _____

3. Major aims or tasks for our sport this year are:

   ( ) teach skill development and game strategies
   ( ) provide quality instruction
   ( ) increase post league play
   ( ) improve officiating
   ( ) physical fitness

Others _____

4. Indicate how you would improve the organizational structure of your club:

( ) improve quality of executive
( ) no improvement necessary
( ) increase numbers of instructors
( ) eliminate post league play
( ) improve communication to all members

Others _____

Concerned Adult Opinionnaire -- Page 2

5. How would you improve the administration of your club?

( ) improve the method of all-star selection
( ) involve more parents
( ) improve discipline of coaches/parents
( ) provincial association should have more jurisdiction
( ) decrease parental pressure

Others _____

6. The most important individuals in our club are:

( ) coaches
( ) officials
( ) players
( ) parents

Others _____

7. Most people are involved in our club because they are:

( ) dedicated and hard workers
( ) interested in participants
( ) experts in lacrosse technique
( ) sports enthusiast
( ) highly competitive

Others _____

8. The most important individuals or groups in our club are:

( ) highly competitive
( ) dedicated
( ) self-directed
( ) likeable
( ) outgoing

Others _____

9. The toughest to the easiest roles in our club are those of:

( ) player
( ) parent
( ) coach
( ) executive
( ) official

Others _____

10. The most exemplary behaviour of people connected with our club while attending practice and/or meets comes from:

( ) all-stars
( ) parents
( ) executive
( ) coaches
( ) low level competitors

11. The most pressure on our club from outside comes from:

( ) parents
( ) lack of lacrosse expertise on the executive level
( ) conflicts due to scheduling vs. family obligations
( ) public press, radio, and T.V. coverage
( ) transportation

Others _____

12. Internal organizational strain comes from:

( ) poor quality of officiating
( ) lack of time to implement new ideas
( ) lack of parental involvement
( ) poor distribution of quality players
( ) lack of [illegible]

( ) lack of pool instructors

Others _____

13. Rank and Recommend the changes listed below:

( ) longer instruction period
( ) qualified coaches
( ) exclude parents as spectators
( ) increase recognition of all stars
( ) more emphasis on house league play

Others _____

OPINIONNAIRE 20

This opinionnaire, designed by a university consulting team and the associates in your sport, is for you to record your own opinions

PLEASE ANSWER ALL ITEMS.

Participant's Opinions

1. Are you playing lacrosse this year?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

2. Check only one category:

   Age Class

   Tyke ☐
   Novice ☐
   Pee-Wee ☐
   Bantam ☐
   Midget ☐
   Juvenile ☐

3. How many years have you played before 1975? ☐

4. House league and All-Star ☐ House league only ☐

5. Number of hours spent each week in practice and games for all-star ☐
   Number of hours spent each week in practice and games for house league ☐

Will you please check your feeling on all statements below:

6. I play to become an excellent lacrosse player.

7. I play for fun.

8. I play to make my city a famous lacrosse area.

9. I play to meet other kids and play lacrosse.

10. I play lacrosse to give me something to do.

Opionnaire -- Page 2

11. I wish there were more players.

12. I think we need more coaches and instructors.

13. It is difficult to get to the arena.

14. Less importance should be put on winning.

15. I like the emphasis on learning lacrosse skills rather than playing games.

16. I think the refereeing should improve.

17. Good players should get more playing time than average players.

18. Players should be asked about practice hours, games, etc.

19. I think we used better equipment.

Opionnaire -- Page 3

20. We need more tournaments.

21. Skills classes should be divided by ability level rather than by age.

22. The Board of Directors and coaches run lacrosse because they are interested in players.

23. The Board of Directors and coaches run lacrosse because they want to win.

24. The Board of Directors and coaches are the most important people in our club.

25. The players and their families are the most important people in our club.

26. Coaches and referees should be more strict in disciplining players and reducing rough play.

27. I like lacrosse the way it is.

APPENDIX B

Project: Competition Concern

WHAT DO WE DO NOW!!

The person being interviewed is an ☐ executive, ☐ coach, ☐ official (referees, etc.) ☐ parent, ☐ sponsor ☐ player.

Please indicate your preference by checking (✓) one (1) choice only from either Column A or Column B for each of the items in Row #1 - 13. The choices are based on interviews with executives, coaches, officials and parents.

		Column A	Column B
1.	ultimate goal	☐ win and/or excel or	☐ participate and play (AS)
2.	aim (long-range)	☐ generalization-child's overall development (AS)	☐ specialization-child's skills development
3.	objective (immediate)	☐ work, to win aggression	☐ partake for fun, relaxation (AS)
4.	rewards	☐ playing is its own reward, no banquet and trophies (AS)	☐ achievement should be rewarded, banquets and trophies
5.	commitment of time (practice and games per week)	☐ 5 hours or less (AS)	☐ 6 hours or more
6.	emphasis in player selection	☐ play the best most often	☐ play everyone equally (AS)
7.	rules application	☐ letter of law (gamesmanship)	☐ spirit of rules (sportsmanship) (AS)
8.	scheduling emphasis	☐ local and league competition (AS)	☐ region and state competition
9.	evaluation of league success	☐ by standings and competitors' calibre	☐ on player improvement & numbers participating (AS)
10.	decision-making level	☐ state/province or national	☐ local league (AS)
11.	growth rate of child	☐ control and rapid development	☐ coordination and natural evolution (AS)
12.	cliches	☐ It doesn't matter if you win or lose, but how you play the game. (AS)	☐ No excuse is adequate for losing. No cost is too high for winning.
13.	philosophy	☐ A game worth playing is worth playing well.	☐ Any game worth playing is worth playing even if poorly. (AS)

Additional Comments: (Please use other side if necessary)

* Areas of Amateur Sport (AS) as designated by the Task Force have been labelled for your convenience.